

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /053 W
-----103472 192215Z /75

O R 192109Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8850
INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 5021

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, EC
SUBJECT: OFFICIAL TALLY TO TAKE SIX WEEKS; MEANWHILE VOTE
COUNT LAGS

1. SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL (SET) PRESIDENT BAQUERO DE LKSF
CALLE ANNOUNCED ON JULY 18 THAT THE OFFICIAL VOTE COUNTING
PROCESS WILL TAKE ABOUT 46 DAYS. HE NOTED THAT THE ELECTORAL
LAW REQUIRES THE SET TO EXAMINE ALL OFFICIAL ACTS OF EACH OF
THE 4,600 POLLING PLACES AND ESTIMATED THAT THE RESULTS FROM
NO MORE THAN 100 PLACES COULD BE EXAMINED PER DAY.

2. MEANWHILE, THE UNOFFICIAL VOTE COUNT HAS TO ALL INTENTS
AND PURPOSES ENDED, IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT 130 TO 180,000
VOTES HAVE NOT YET APPEARED IN UNOFFICIAL FIGURES. IT IS
PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE EXACTLY THE NUMBER OF
UNCOUNTED VOTES SINCE NO ONE IS CERTAIN OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF
PEOPLE WHO ACTUALLY CAST BALLLOTS. THE EMBASSY'S BEST
ESTIMATE, DISTILLED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES, IS THAT
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12-15 PERCENT OF THE 2-1. MILLION REGISTERED DID NOT VOTE.
LATEST UNOFFICIAL TALLIES REFLECT SOME 1.62 MILLION VOTES,
OR 75 PERCENT OF THOSE REGISTERED, LEAVING ANOTHER 10-12
PERCZEW UNACCOUNTED FOR.

3. UNFORTUNATELY, NEITHER THE NATIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE
(SENDIP) OR THE SET SEEM TO BE CONTINUING THE EFFORT TO

COLLECT AND DISSEMINATE THE COUNT. THE CONCERTED EFFORT TO COLLECT TALLIES AND GET FIGURES OUT TO THE PUBLIC THAT RESULTED IN PUBLICATION OF 85 OR SO PERCENT OF THE VOTE BY JULY 17, SEFGED TO END ON THAT DAY. SINCE THEN THE ONLY SERIOUS ADDITIONS TO FIGURES HAVE BEEN THOSE OBTAINED BY THE PRESS IN ITS EFFORTS TO REPORT ON LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS.

4. IT APPEARS THAT THE FINAL RESULTS WILL C SE TRICKLING

IN OVER THE NEXT WEEK, AND THEN MAY NOT BE CARRIED IN THE PRESS, OR SIMPLY MAY NOT BE KNOWN UNTIL THE SET ANNOUNCES ITS OFFICIAL FIGURES. THE RESULT IS SOME UNCERTAINTY. THE LITERAL PARTY, WITH RAUL CLEMENTE HUERTA STILL TRAILING SIXTO DURAN BY SOME 19,000 VOTES, HAS CLAIMED THAT HUERTA WILL EVENTUALLY EMERGE THE RUN-OFF CANDIDATE. THEY BASE THEIR CLAIM ON THE BELIEF THAT MANY OF THE MISSING VOTES COME FROM PROVINCES KNOW TO FAVOR HUERTA. EMBASSY CALCULATIONS, HOWEVER, INDICATE THAT THE REMAINING VOTES ARE FAIRLY EVENLY SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. WE DOUBT THAT A SWING TO HERTA OF THE DIMENSIONS NECESSARY TO OVERTAKE DURAN IS VERY LIKELY.

5. COMMENT: THE LAG IN THE VOTE COUNT IS, AT THE VERY LEAST, ANNOYING. IT ALSO, OF COURSE, RAISES SOME POSSIBILITY OF MANIPULATIONS IN PREPARING THE OFFICIAL CONFIDENTIAL

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COUNT WHICH COULD DETERMINE WHO PLACES SECOND. THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE VOTE COUNTING PROCESS VERY CAREFULLY.
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